

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

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R 281715Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1990

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BERLIN 5148

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINR, US, GE

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER,  
JANUARY 27

1. AT THE SUGGESTION OF GDR FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO THAT WE DISCUSS OUR RELATIONS PRIOR TO MY CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON, I CALLED ON FISCHER ON JANUARY 27 ACCOMPANIED BY THE DCM. ALSO PRESENT DURING OUR CONVERSATION WERE DR. GEYER, OF THE AMERICAN SECTION, AND AN INTERPRETER. WE MET IN A SMALL ROOM OFF THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S MAIN OFFICE AND OUR DISCUSSION, WHICH LASTED  
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ONE HOUR AND FIFTEEN MINUTES, TOOK PLACE IN A RELAXED

ATMOSPHERE.

2. FISCHER OPENED THE CONVERSATION BY SAYING THAT IT WAS "THE MOST NORMAL THING IN THE WORLD" THAT WE SHOULD BE MEETING TO TALK ABOUT OUR RELATIONS IN GENERAL, ESPECIALLY BEFORE MY TRIP TO WASHINGTON. I ASKED HIM IF HE WOULD PROVIDE HIS VIEW OF OUR RELATIONS THUS FAR, AND COMMENT UPON WHAT HE THOUGHT WOULD BE POSSIBLE DURING 1976.

3. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID HE HAD SPENT SOME TIME REFLECTING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TIES BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES. HE HAD TOLD SECRETARY KISSINGER AT HELSINKI THAT OUR RELATIONS REQUIRED "MORE COURAGE AND SPIRIT." THE SECRETARY REPLIED THAT SLOWNESS WAS INHERENT IN A BUREAUCRACY AND HAD TO BE OVERCOME. FISCHER AND THE SECRETARY HAD AGREED THEY WOULD FROM TIME TO TIME THEMSELVES CONTROL THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS. AT THE TIME OF THE UNGA THERE WAS NO NEED FOR A MEETING TO AGREE ON WHAT HAD HAPPENED SINCE HELSINKI "BECAUSE NOTHING HAS HAPPENED." "WE COULD HAVE TALKED ABOUT OUR TRAVELS," FISCHER SAID, "AS BOTH OF US HAVE BEEN TRAVELING A GREAT DEAL." HE FOUND THAT THE END OF JANUARY MARKED A LONGER PERIOD AND,

ON REFLECTION, HE WOULD NOW REPEAT HIS STATEMENT TO SECRETARY KISSINGER AT HELSINKI: "BASICALLY, WE HAVE NOT MADE PROGRESS ANYWHERE ."

4. FISCHER SAID OUR POLITICAL RELATIONS WERE KNOWN TO BOTH SIDES. HE CONSIDERED THEM NORMAL. GDR AMBASSADOR SIEBER HAS MET WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER ONCE IN AN ATTEMPT AT A POLITICAL DIALOGUE.

5. IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE THERE HAD BEEN MEETINGS AND TRIPS, BUT THESE WERE "PRACTICALLY WITHOUT CONCRETE RESULTS." DR. BEIL'S TRIP TO THE US HAD A CERTAIN SIGNIFICANCE, "BUT THE OUTCOME WAS NOT SOUNDLY RELATED TO THE EFFORTS EXPENDED."

6. IN NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, A LONG TIME HAD BEEN SPENT WITHOUT MUCH PROGRESS. THE AMERICAN SIDE CONSIDERS ALL QUESTIONS TO BE INTERRELATED, AND THIS MAKES EVERYTHING MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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DIFFICULT. FISCHER HOPED THE NEXT ROUND OF CONSULAR CONVENTION NEGOTIATIONS WOULD MAKE PROGRESS. HE SAID THE PARCEL POST AGREEMENT PROPOSED BY THE USG HAD LANGUISHED FOR ONE YEAR WITHOUT ANY US REACTION TO AN INITIAL EXCHANGE OF DRAFTS.

7. ON THE QUESTIONS OF FISHERIES AND ACCESS TO PORTS THE TWO GOVERNMENTS HAD NOT EVEN BEEN ABLE TO ADDRESS PARTS OF THESE PROBLEMS. "NORMALLY I DO NOT MENTION SUCH DETAILS. I NOW MENTION THEM AS

FOREIGN MINISTER TO HIGHLIGHT THAT WE ARE NOT MOVING IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS."

8. FISCHER SAID HE WAS "AFRAID" TO STATE THAT WE HAD MADE PROGRESS IN OUR CULTURAL RELATIONS BECAUSE NOTHING WORTH MENTIONING HAD HAPPENED. SOME MUSEUM EXHIBITS WOULD BE EXCHANGED NEXT YEAR, AND

THAT WAS ABOUT ALL. FISCHER SAID HE REFERRED TO SUCH DETAILS BECAUSE THAT IS HOW THE SITUATION APPEARED TO HIM.

9. HE BELIEVED IT IN OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS TO HAVE GOOD AND INTENSIVE RELATIONS IN ALL AREAS AND SAW NOTHING DIRECTLY IN THE WAY AS AN OBSTACLE TO SUCH RELATIONS. FISCHER OBSERVED THAT BOTH SIDES HAD THEIR FRIENDS AND ALLIES. OUR COUNTRIES, HE SAID, ARE ON DIFFERENT SIDES, BUT WE SHOULD HAVE RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF HELSINKI. THE GDR DOES NOT INTEND TO SET UP OBSTACLES.

"OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES ARE PLEASED WHEN WE HAVE RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES THAT IMPLEMENT HELSINKI, HE SAID. IF THE GDR GOVERNMENT SENSED THE SAME DESIRE ON THE US SIDE, IT WOULD MEET IT, AS THE GDR IS PREPARED TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO THE FINAL ACT OF HELSINKI. FISCHER ASKED ME, WHEN I SAW SECRETARY KISSINGER, TO CONVEY HIS HOPE THAT WE COULD STRIKE A BALANCE IN OUR RELATIONS AS HAD BEEN AGREED IN HELSINKI. HE WOULD BE PLEASED IF WE COULD REVIEW, AT APPROPRIATE TIMES, THE EXTENT OF PROGRESS IN OUR RELATIONS. HE SAID HE HAD EMPHASIZED THE FINAL ACT OF HELSINKI IN ORDER TO BE LYRICAL; IT WAS STILL A VIRGIN AREA IN OUR RELATIONS.

10. FINALLY, AFTER 25 MINUTES, HE ASKED ME TO CONVEY HIS BEST WISHES TO SECRETARY KISSINGER AND HIS FRIEND DAVID ROCKEFELLER.

11. I BEGAN MY RESPONSE BY THANKING THE FOREIGN MINISTER FOR HIS FRANK STATEMENT, OBSERVING THAT THE US AND GDR HAD ESTABLISHED CONFIDENTIAL

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RELATIONS AFTER A LONG PERIOD OF ISOLATION THAT IN ITSELF HAD PRESENTED PROBLEMS. I RECALLED THAT IN MY FIRST MEETINGS WITH HONECKER, FISCHER AND GEYER THEY HAD NOTED THAT OUR COUNTRIES HAD DIFFERENT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS, DIFFERENT IDEOLOGICAL VIEWS,

DIFFERENT ALLIANCES AND PRIORITIES. I HAD CONCURRED IN THESE STATEMENTS OF OUR DIFFERENCES AND HAD NOTED THAT WE HAD ALSO HAD DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES WITH THE US SYSTEM LASTING OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS, RECOGNIZING THESE DIFFERENCES, MEANT THAT BOTH SIDES HAD DECIDED TO ESTABLISH GOOD BILATERAL TIES. THIS IS THE VIEW OF PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER. IN A LARGER SENSE, GOOD US/GDR RELATIONS ARE NECESSARY TO DETENTE AND THE AVOIDANCE OF CONFRONTATION. PROGRESS TOWARD MAINTAINING PEACE IS ESSENTIAL IN A WORLD OF NUCLEAR ARMS. I HOPED TO SEE NOT ONLY PROGRESS IN

PRACTICAL MATTERS, BUT ALSO IN THE UNDERSTANDING AND TRUST ON WHICH PRACTICAL MATTERS MUST ESSENTIALLY REST.

12. I UNDERSTOOD THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S STATEMENT THAT IT WAS NOT NORMAL FOR HIM TO DISCUSS DETAILS. BUT AS HE HAD EMPHASIZED WHEN WE MET FOR THE FIRST TIME IN JANUARY OF 1975 THAT WE WOULD PROCEED ON A STEP-BY-STEP BASIS TO BUILD OUR RELATIONS, AND HAD SPOKEN OF SPECIFIC PROBLEMS TODAY, I WOULD MAKE MY COMMENTS

ON HIS OBSERVATIONS NOT ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF HELSINKI, WHICH WAS A MULTI-NATIONAL STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES, BUT ALSO IN LIGHT OF THE SEPTEMBER 4, 1974 AGREED MINUTE THAT ESTABLISHED OUR RELATIONS. I TOLD FISCHER THE GDR HAD A GOOD AMBASSADOR IN SIEBER, WHO WAS VERY ACTIVE IN WASHINGTON. HE HAS HAD MANY DISCUSSIONS IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND WITH MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS, AND HAS SEEN SECRETARY KISSINGER TWICE.

13. AS TO THE SPECIFIC ISSUES HE HAD MENTIONED, I SAID THE QUESTION OF ACCESS OF GDR SHIPS TO US PORTS SHOULD NOT POSE SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES, AND WAS A MATTER WHICH I EXPECTED BOTH SIDES WOULD SOON DISCUSS. REGARDING FISHERIES, THE USG HAD NOT ENGAGED IN BILATERAL AGREEMENTS, EXCEPT WITH THE SOVIET UNION, BECAUSE WE HOPED THESE QUESTIONS COULD BE RESOLVED BY A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE. WE WERE DISCUSSING OUR VIEWS ON THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF FISHERIES IN ICNAF WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE GDR.  
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R 281715Z JAN 76  
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1991  
INFO AMEMBASY BONN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USMISSION USNATO  
USMISSION USBERLIN  
AEMEMBASSY BELGRADE 1242  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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14. CONCERNING EXPANDED TRADE, I SAID THAT ALTHOUGH  
MOVEMENT WAS SLOW WE WERE AT THE BEGINNING OF  
SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS DESPITE THE FACT THAT BOTH  
COUNTRIES HAD DIFFERENT TRADING SYSTEMS. THE US WOULD  
BE REPRESENTED AT THE LEIPZIG SPRING FAIR IN TWO  
EXHIBITS. DR BEIL TOLD ME THAT HE HAD FOUND HIS  
TRIP TO THE US PRODUCTIVE, AND HE EXPECTED IT TO  
RESULT IN AGREEMENTS BENEFICIAL TO BOTH COUNTRIES.  
MANY AMERICAN FIRMS AND BANKS SENT THEIR REPRESENTA-  
TIVES TO VISIT THE GDR. THE US GOVERNMENT, AND THE  
EMBASSY SPECIFICALLY, FULLY SUPPORTED THESE ACTIVITIES.  
ALL IN ALL, I SAID, I DISAGREED WITH HIS ANALYSIS OF  
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1975 AND DID NOT CONSIDER THE PAST YEAR WASTED. FISCHER  
IMMEDIATELY CHIMED IN TO SAY HE AGREED IT HAD NOT BEEN  
WASTED.

15. I THEN STATED THAT I WISHED TO BE FRANK ON ANOTHER  
MATTER--TO WHICH FISCHER RESPONDED" PLEASE, THAT IS  
THE ONLY WAY." I SAID THE US BELIEVED CULTURAL EXCHANGES  
COULD BE HELPFUL TO BOTH COUNTRIES. THE GDR HAS TAKEN A  
NUMBER OF INITIATIVES, BUT WE DID NOT BELIEVE THERE HAD  
BEEN GDR RECIPROCITY. THERE ARE MANY PERSONS OF GERMAN  
DESCENT LIVING IN THE US. THERE ARE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS  
WHO WERE BORN IN WHAT IS NOW THE GDR. AMERICAN SCHOLARS  
WISH TO STUDY HERE. THERE WERE SIGNIFICANT OTHER AREAS  
FOR EXCHANGE AS WELL, AS IN SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL  
RESEARCH. FISCHER AGREED THAT RECIPROCITY WAS PROPER.

16. REFERRING TO THE CONSULAR NEGOTIATIONS, I SAID THAT THE THIRD ROUND WOULD TAKE PLACE IN WASHINGTON DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH. I HAD SPOKEN TO FIRST SECRETARY HONECKER ABOUT THE US POSITION AND REASONS FOR OPPOSING THE INCLUSION OF A DEFINITION OF NATIONALITY WHEN I MET WITH HIM LAST NOVEMBER. THE US DOES NOT IN ITS CONSULAR AGREEMENTS INCLUDE POLITICAL WORDING OR POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, THERE WAS NO QUESTION THAT GDR OFFICIALS WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO GDR CITIZENS IN THE US, BUT THE US HAD A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT WHICH COULD NOT DIRECT INDIVIDUALS TO BE REPRESENTED BY A PARTICULAR COUNTRY. I SAID I HOPED THE GDR WOULD GIVE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION TO THE US POSITION ON NATIONALITY. FISCHER MADE NO COMMENT, AND IN FACT LOOKED RATHER STERN.

17. PRESIDENT FORD HAD DECLARED US SUPPORT FOR ALL ELEMENTS OF THE FINAL ACT OF HELSINKI. WE HAVE STATED OUR VIEW THAT IT SHOULD BE SUPPORTED BY ACTION, NOT JUST WORDS. WE HAVE NOT SOUGHT TO MAKE BASKET THREE OF THAT DOCUMENT PARAMOUNT, YET WE DID EXPECT SOME PROGRESS IN THIS AREA. THE GDR HAS A NUMBER OF HUMANITARIAN CASES FOR ITS CONSIDERATION AND IN OUR VIEW, BEGINNING WITH THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF THE FINAL ACT, THERE IS A HUMANE QUALITY THROUGHOUT THE HELSINKI DOCUMENT. THE USG HAS NO INTENTION TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS  
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OF THE GDR WITH REGARD TO HUMANITARIAN CASES NOR DO WE SEEK TO MAKE PUBLIC ISSUES OUT OF THESE CASES. AND YET, WHEN A FRIEND OF MINE, SUCH AS CONGRESSMAN REUSS, WRITES TO ASK ME WHY THERE HAS NOT BEEN PROGRESS IN A PARTICULAR CASE, ALL I CAN REPLY IS THAT WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO GET ACTION FROM THE GDR. I SAID THAT SURELY THE GDR COULD TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION CASES OF TRAGEDY, DEATH, ILLNESS AND SEPARATION OF IMMEDIATE FAMILY WHICH ARE CLEARLY HUMANITARIAN. AGAIN FISCHER MADE NO COMMENT.

18. I RAISED THE SUBJECT OF JEWISH CLAIMS, SAYING THAT WHILE IT WAS TOO SOON TO PREDICT THE OUTCOME OF EFFORTS TOWARD SETTLEMENT, I HOPED THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WOULD FACILITATE MEETINGS BETWEEN CONCERNED US AND GDR REPRESENTATIVES. FISCHER INTERVENED AT THIS POINT TO ASK WHETHER THIS WAS DR. FUNKE'S GROUP AND DR. GEYER RESPONDED AFFIRMATIVELY.

19. I CONCLUDED MY REVIEW OF OUR RELATIONS BY NOTING THAT RESOLUTION OF THE QUESTIONS I HAD MENTIONED WOULD CREATE A POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE. I SAID THAT MY STAFF

AND I HAD RECEIVED CORRECT AND HELPFUL TREATMENT IN THE PROCESS OF SETTLING IT. I WOULD DISCUSS WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND OTHERS, INCLUDING PEOPLE IN THE CONGRESS WHO HAD AN INTEREST. MY GOVERNMENT BELIEVES WE CAN MAKE PROGRESS IN ALL OF THESE MATTERS. TRADE, FOR EXAMPLE, WILL INCREASE. AS I GREW OLDER I THOUGHT MORE OF THE DANGERS IN THE WORLD AND THE NEED TO PROMOTE DETENTE NOT IN WORDS BUT IN FACT, AND TO AVOID CONFRONTATION BECAUSE WAR IS AN IMPOSSIBILITY.

20. FISCHER REPLIED THAT HE WAS NOT ALL THAT YOUNG HIMSELF, AND HE AGREED WITH MY LAST OBSERVATION. HE THEN COMMENTED ON SOME OF THE POINTS I HAD MADE.

21. FISCHER SAID AGAIN THAT IT WOULD BE WRONG TO CHARACTERIZE THE PST YEAR AS A WASTE OF TIME. OUR RELATIONS HAD JUSTIFIED THE EXPENSES OF ESTABLISHING EMBASSIES, WHICH HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE. " BUT BOTH OF US", HE SAID, " NEEDED TO CITE DETAILS IN ORDER TO CONFIDENTIAL

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CHARACTERIZE OUR RELATIONS, AND TO ME THAT IS EVIDENCE THAT WE ARE JUST AT THE BEGINNING." FISCHER SAID THAT CLIMATE IS IMPORTANT AND THAT THE CLIMATE OF OUR RELATIONS IS GOOD. BOTH COUNTRIES REALIZE THAT THEIR GOOD RELATIONS WILL CONTRIBUTE TO DETENTE. THE US IS BIG, THE GDR SMALL. NEVERTHELESS RELATIONS BETWEEN US SOMETIMES AFFECT MUCH LARGER WORLD QUESTIONS AND THEREFORE ALSO AFFECT DETENTE. FISCHER SAID HE THOUGHT IT WAS TIME FOR A NEW STAGE , AND THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE A ONE-WAY STREET BUT A STREET LEADING IN BOTH DIRECTIONS.

22. THE FOREIGN MINISTER NOTED THAT I HAD SPOKEN AT SOME LENGTH CONCERNING BASKET THREE. HE SAID THAT BOTH COUNTRIES PERCEIVED BASKET THREE. HE SAID THAT BOTH COUNTRIES PERCEIVED THE FINAL ACT AS A WHOLE. THE GDR CONSIDERED HUMANITARIAN CASES TO HAVE GREAT POLITICAL IMPORTANCE. THE GDR GOVERNMENT HAD RESOLVED A GOOD TWO-THIRDS OF THESE CASES AND THE REST WERE BEING GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. DR GEYER, FOR EXAMPLE, HAD WITHIN TEN DAYS OF HIS RETURN FROM THE US RESOLVED ONE SUCH CASE. THE GDR DID NOT USE HUMANITARIAN CASES AS LEVERS; THERE WAS NO LINKAGE BETWEEN THESE CASES AND OTHER QUESTIONS IN OUR RELATIONS. THE SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION OF A CONSULAR AGREEMENT, HOWEVER, WOULD HELP RELATIONS IN THIS AREA. FISCHER SAID HE WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY INTENTION TO POLITICIZE THE CONSULAR AGREEMENT. HE SAID A WAY MUST BE FOUND BY EXPERTS TO CHARACTERIZE NATIONALITY. THE GDR HAS BEEN ABLE TO DO THIS WITH OTHER WESTERN

COUNTRIES. POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS ARE NOT INVOLVED.  
THE CONSULAR CONVENTION IS A DOCUMENT INTENDED TO  
HELP CITIZENS OF BOTH COUNTRIES.

23. FISCHER CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE WAS AN OPTIMIST.  
HE LIKED WORKING AND MOST, ALTHOUGH NOT ALL, OF THE  
PEOPLE IN HIS MINISTRY ALSO LIKED TO WORK. HE BELIEVED  
THERE WOULD BE PROGRESS.

24. COMMENT: I FOUND FISCHER MORE RELAXED AND SELF-  
ASSURED BY FAR THAN HE WAS IN MY FIRST MEETING WITH HIM.  
SHORTLY BEFORE HE BECAME FOREIGN  
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MINISTER A YEAR AGO(BERLIN 5014). HE WAS WELL BRIEFED  
AND CLEARLY INTENDED HIS MESSAGE OF INERTIA IN OUR  
RELATIONS FOR WASHINGTON'S EARS. HE AVOIDED POLEMICS  
AND REFERENCES TO IDEOLOGY. HIS TONE WAS LEVEL, SINCERE,  
POLITE AND SOMETIMES BEMUSED WITH AN OCCASIONAL ATTEMPT  
AT HUMOR. NEVERTHELESS, ALTHOUGH HE HAS BEEN EXTREMELY  
COURTEOUS TO ME SINCE OUR FIRST MEETING, I COULD NOT  
DETECT ANY REAL FLEXIBILITY IN HIS VIEWS. A SMALL  
MAN WITH PIERCING EYES, HE DOES NOT FIT INTO THE  
FOREIGN MINISTRY MOLD, NOR IS THIS HIS BACKGROUND.  
THERE WAS A MAVERICK QUALITY ABOUT HIM, EVEN IN HIS  
GARISH WAY OF DRESSING.COOPER

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## Message Attributes

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